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Chief, Operations Group				DATE ST/
				January 1988
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# **EMBASSY OF THE** UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE **ABIDJAN BUREAU**



FBIS-2607-88 1 February 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THRU:

Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT:

Monthly Report--Abidjan Bureau--January 1988

#### I. GENERAL

Plans to relocate the Chancery have apparently reached a temporary standstill. The latest two proposed sites, both existing buildings-one in the downtown section of the city and the other two blocks from the bureau--have been dropped from consideration. The original plan to purchase a plot of land near the Hotel Ivoire and build a new Chancery has by default become the primary alternative though it is questionable whether the necessary funds can be obtained. Meanwhile, the Embassy is continuing to search for a suitable existing building.

#### II. **OPERATIONS**

#### Monitorial/Editorial Α.

- 1. The major event in January was British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's visit to Nigeria for talks with President Babangida, the first visit by a British head of state since Harold Wilson in 1966. Many had expected some fireworks over the issue of South African sanctions but this did not occur, at least publically. President Babangida did however raise the issue in his 8 January banquet speech when he noted: "Our two governments are therefore agreed that apartheid must be dismantled. It is on the methodology that we differ." Aside from some minor public demonstrations, the visit appeared to go smoothly. The comment and reportage on the visit by other area media was noticably sparse.
- 2. Burkina Faso continued a high level of diplomatic activity in the aftermath of the October coup. Early in the month, Head of State Blaise Compaore visited Libya for talks with Al-Qadhdhafi followed by a visit by the foreign minister to Ghana in mid-month. This was in turn followed by a visit to Ghana by Compaore another scheduled Compaore visit, to meet with Ivory Coast President Houphouet-Boigny, was postponed at the last minute because Houphouet was said to be "tired." The general purpose of the visits was to strengthen good-neighborly ties, especially with the Ghanian head of state who was thought to be personal friends with the deposed Burkinabe leader Thomas Sankara. Reports after the Ghana visit said that Ghana Head of State Rawlings had informed Compaore that Captain Kabore, a regional commander who had balked at following the new regime and eventually fled before armed forces loyal to Compaore, had "taken refuge in Ghana."

3. In Zaire, President Mobutu announced on 14 January that the Zairians would be "reoriented" as a "deterrent force" following the intensive reequipment of the armies of certain unidentified neighboring countries. Various press agencies have stated this almost certainly means Angola. In other Zaire developments, Iran's envoy was denounced in several scathing commentaries for refusing to shake the hand of the Zairian first lady in a reception line. Also, a prominent Zairian opposition figure was arrested during a public demonstration critical of Mobutu.

# B. Coverage

The bureau's coverage of AFP via the landline continues to be a problem due to the inability of the local PT&T to repair problems in transmission lines. We have backstopped from AFP high frequency but have had to rely on the Wire to backstop us at those times when the high frequency signal is not available locally.

# C. Communications

 ${\tt BACH}$  2.0 was received and installed in the Communications Section this month.

# III. ADMINISTRATION

### A. Personnel

The bureau chief returned from R&R on 12 January.

## B. Other

1. In addition to Frankfurt, Germany, London's Humana Hospital Wellington has been designated a medevac point for posts in Africa.

2. A security officer		conducted	а	security	inspec-
tion of the bureau on 26 Janaury.	•	•			

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### IV. VISITS

FED Deputy Chief

TDY'd at the bureau 17-21 Janaury.

During the visit, tested a computer-to-computer modem hook-up for communicating between Headquarters and the bureau. He also tested and demonstrated a computer program for controlling the bureau's press rack receivers.

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Chief, Abidjan Bureau

## Attachments:

Monthly Production Report

cc: Chief, Swaziland Bureau
Deputy Chief, London Bureau

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